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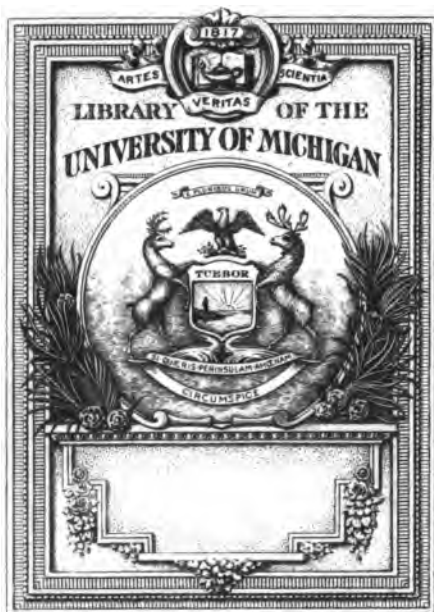
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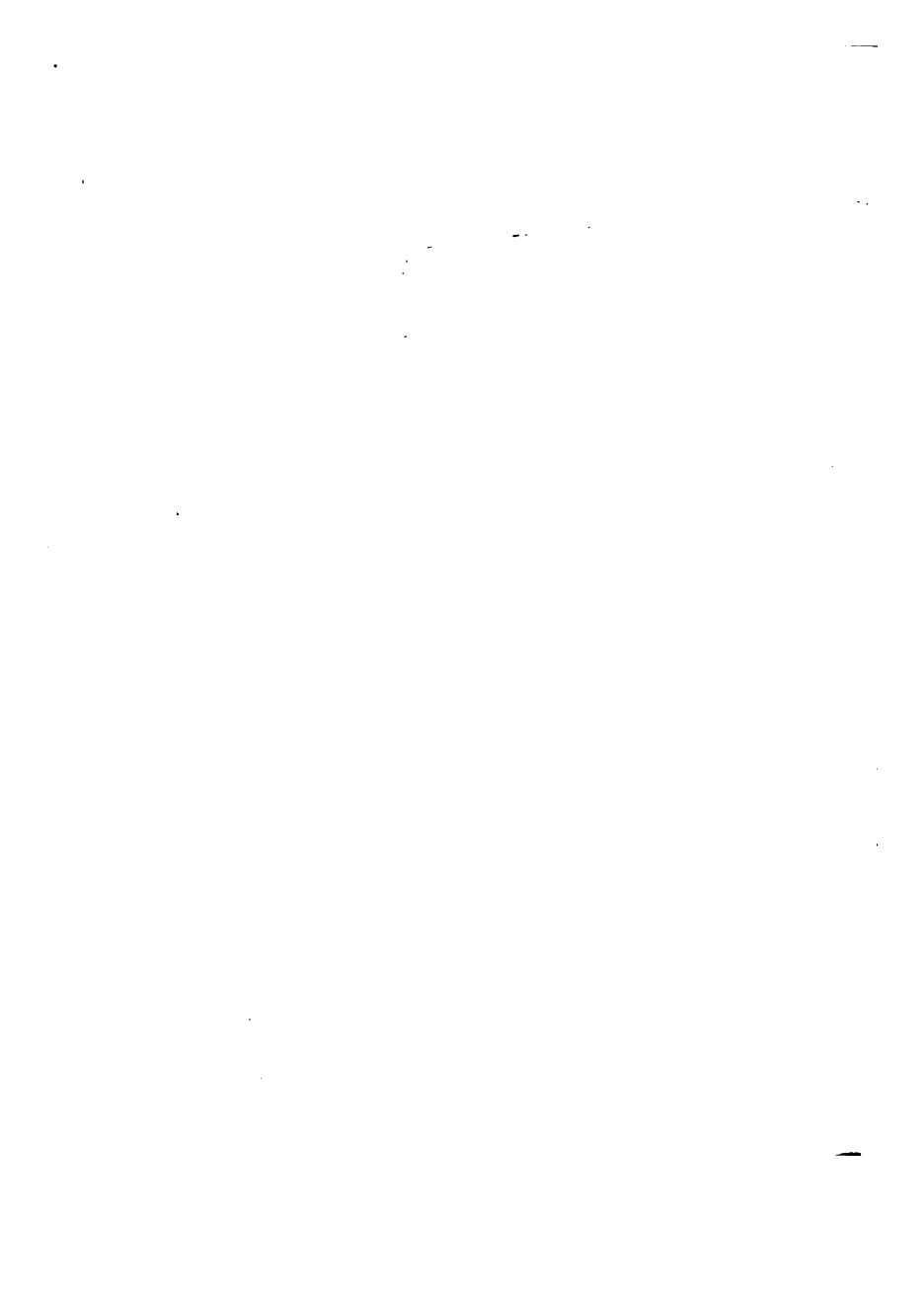
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THE GIFT OF
Mrs. Sydney Thompson



Dr. R. G. Gillette
With author's
Comments
FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

A TEST CASE.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE CHICAGO TRIBUNE.

THIRD EDITION.

*With Additional Chapters on the NATURE of this Punishment,
Its DURATION and the RELATIVE NUMBER of
THE SAVED and THE LOST.*

BY REV. H.^A L. HAMMOND,
Author of "Valley of Pearls," "New Stories from
an Old Book."

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Mrs Sidney Thompson
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NOTE.

The first part of this pamphlet — the correspondence with the *Chicago Tribune* — was published, as will be seen, some ten years ago. The favor with which it was then received may be learned from a few samples of notices :

“An admirable dissection and exposure of a plausible and popular delusion. A good thing to have it scattered abroad by thousands.

“Racine, Wis.

J. K. K.”

“The pamphlet hits the nail right on the head. The old prophet speaks of the hand that smites once and not the second time. Once *satis est*. [Rev.] C. HAMMOND, *Principal*.”

“Monson, Mass.

“Greatly interested in your treatise. The best thing I have seen on that subject.”

“REV. E. W. TAYLOR.”

“It seems to me to meet the case amply, plainly, fully and candidly. Hope you will secure for it a wide circulation among those who are confused and misled by such sophistries.”

C. C. C.”

“HOWARD UNIVERSITY,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

“Your little pamphlets on FUTURE PUNISHMENT came safely to hand and were read with deep interest by me and my family. You have not often done a better thing. The points were admirably made, and covered the case completely, leaving the *Tribune* not an inch of standing room. As the pastors did not reply to the paper, they should certainly give you a vote of thanks for doing it in their behalf, for the *Tribune* article was very plausible to the common mind.”

Yours truly,

“WM. W. PATTON.”

The following from the now sainted commentator is not quite all germane to this subject, but is too good to be abbreviated :

“OBERLIN, March 30, 1878.

“DEAR BROTHER:—I have just read your pamphlet on FUTURE PUNISHMENT, with unqualified admiration. The spirit of the discussion is a model, the argument on your side well managed and conclusive. I am sure it must do good.

“As I read I was impressed with this : that the gospel scheme is virtually God’s great solicitation to revolted man to come back with pardon for the past, into sympathy with himself in his benevolence toward all sentient beings ; regeneration is not that vague meaningless thing many suppose it to be, but is in substance *man’s consent*, but to be unregenerate is his guilty refusal. Pity the gospel should be so

egregiously misconceived! Let us do all we can to bring men to better thinking in its vital points."

"Ever yours,

"HENRY COWLES."

"A remarkably clear and clean-cut argument. The best I ever saw on that subject."

"[Dea.] JAMES FRANCIS,

"*Pittsfield, Mass.*"

"Brother Hammond has done that work singularly well.

"H. D. KITCHEL,

"*Ex-President of Middlebury College.*"

Equally emphatic indorsements could be quoted from President Fairchild, Dr. Edward P. Goodwin, Joseph Cook, and many others.

The professors of the Chicago Theological Seminary supplied each of its students with a copy.

Two editions were issued at that time, but they were long ago exhausted. In preparing a third, the author has seen no occasion for revising his reply to the *Tribune*, since there has never, to his knowledge, been any attempt to answer the argument. But he has thought to increase the usefulness of the treatise by adding a few short chapters which then seemed essential to a full discussion of the great theme, but were omitted, — on the NATURE of this punishment, its DURATION, and the comparative numbers of the SAVED and the LOST.

These additions, it may be well to say, have been submitted to the same critical theologian of national repute who advised the publication of the first edition.

And now it is confidently hoped that it presents in compact form a ready and satisfactory reply to the most common and popular objections brought against the doctrine of Retribution. It is commended to theological students, to Bible classes, to evangelistic workers, to young pastors, and to all who have to deal with honest inquirers, or even with skeptics.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A TEST CASE.

The Chicago *Tribune* of January 26, 1878, in an editorial entitled "Beecher on Hell," contained the following illustration :

"We will suppose the case of a man who has led an exemplary life. He has always been a peaceable, law-abiding, industrious citizen. He has been charitably disposed and has done great good to his fellow-man. He has won the respect and admiration of the community in which he resides. He is not, however, a religious man. He has not been converted. His heart has not been changed, and he is looked upon by church people as unregenerate. Some night, while on his way homeward, he is set upon as poor McConville was the other day, and murdered without provocation or cause by a drunken, bloodthirsty desperado, who has long been the terror of the community. The degraded, brutal wretch is arrested and is put upon his trial. By some miracle the technicalities of the laws and the decisions of lenient and maudlin judges do not assist him to escape. He is found guilty and is sentenced to be hanged. In the interim

between his trial and his execution he meets with a change of heart and experiences religion. He goes to the gallows singing psalms, shouting glory, praying, expressing to the crowd his new-found peace of heart, and enthusiastically anticipating his immediate entrance into the New Jerusalem. Now, if we are to accept the Calvinistic doctrines literally as the Calvinists would have us to accept the Scriptures, the victim of this murderer is plunged into the abyss of Hell by the murderer's knife, there to suffer for endless ages the torments of the damned, because he was an unregenerate man, while the desperado himself, having been regenerated, goes to Heaven, and, with harp in hand or vigorously waving his palm-branch, looks down with complacency upon his unregenerate victim, writhing in the torments to which he sent him. Now, Mr. Beecher does not believe in this disposition of the two men. He does not believe the murdered man went to Hell because he was unregenerate, nor that the murderer went to Heaven because he was regenerate. We would like to put this same case before our Calvinistic clergymen, and to ask them what they really believe is the future destiny of the murderer and his victim. It is a fair test case, and we should like to know their views without quibble or evasion."

THE MURDERER AND HIS VICTIM.

To the Editor of the Chicago Tribune.

DEAR SIR :—I have waited for the pastors of the city to comment on your “suppositious case of a murderer who dies regenerate and his victim who dies unregenerate,” found in the *Tribune* of January 26. But there may be many good reasons why they do not answer, which do not imply inability to meet the case, and I cannot longer repress a desire to say something on the subject myself.

(1) The supposition is not a new one. Seldom, perhaps, has it been put as graphically as in your editorial ; yet I have been familiar with it, in substance, for many years. Indeed, it is, I think, a favorite illustrative argument against future punishment with certain controversialists. I do not, however, object to it on account of its age, but mention this merely to show that, as it has not heretofore been thought unanswerable by the clergy, it will not probably be now.

(2) Why you should call specially on the “Calvinistic” clergy for reply, rather than on the Lutheran, Arminian, Episcopalian and

Roman Catholic clergy, who all teach future punishment, is not apparent ; but, waiving that, I would say :

(3) The supposition assumes and appeals to an instinctive demand for equity or justice in the treatment of men by their Creator, and so far so good. If the great principles of justice were more thoroughly discussed in connection with this matter, better results would be reached.

(4) It assumes that when there is an apparent want of equity, reason demands an explanation ; and this is just what makes a day of judgment necessary, for the public revelation of the righteousness of God's dealings with men. And so there is one of the specific doctrines of evangelical religion implied, if not granted. Thanks for that.

Now, let us analyze this very plausible illustration a little. Are you shocked in this case at the idea that a penitent murderer should go to Heaven ? Is murder, then, an unpardonable sin ? If so, then there is one class of sinners who can't be saved, and so *universal* salvation is denied by this "suppositious case." But then what would become of the prayer of Jesus for his murderers, "Father, forgive them," if their forgiveness was impossible ? And how could the Apostle Paul be forgiven, who persecuted

the Christians unto death? Do you say, "Of course you did not mean this?" What, then, is it that shocks you in the supposition that this murderer goes to Heaven? Is it because he murdered an unregenerate man? If his victim had only been an innocent child or a saintly woman, he might on repentance go to Heaven unchallenged? But since he killed an unconverted man, there should be no admission for him within the gates? But what sort of reasoning is this which makes it a venal offense to kill a good man, but a mortal one to kill an unconverted man? This reasoning, too, would deny the salvation of all, for here would be one class of men that must perish.

Is the shock because this penitent murderer goes singing and rejoicing to the gallows? But if he is really penitent, and not hypocritical or self-deceived, why should he not sing and rejoice? He has been "forgiven much." Why should he not rejoice much? If he is going into a happy eternity, why should he not be happy in the prospect? Moreover, his joy now can add nothing to the woes of his "victim" who died months before, nor if he should go wailing to the gallows could that ameliorate the sorrows of the "victim."

Is the objection to his salvation on account of his bad character previous to committing the

murder? Then the case might be stated thus : The murderer of an unconverted man ought not to be forgiven if he was a bad man before committing the murder. Is this what you mean, and is here a class of sinners who can't be saved ?

But perhaps you say, " We don't specially object to the salvation of this murderer, but it is the poor 'victim' we pity." Very well, if it is understood that the salvation of the murderer has nothing to do with the case, and all the rhetoric about him was only for effect, we will leave him rejoicing in the wondrous mercy of a forgiving God, and look after the "victim." And now observe (1) the murdered man is not lost because he was murdered ; for if he had died by accident, by a fever, or small-pox, with an unregenerate heart, our belief is that he would have been miserable. On the other hand, if he had been converted, he would have gone to Heaven though murdered, as did Abel and Stephen when they were martyred.

Nor, again (2), is he lost because his murderer is saved. Heaven is not so narrow that the entrance of the murderer thither has crowded out his victim. Nor is there remaining any such antagonism on the part of the former murderer as should make it unsafe for the "victim" to be there too. For by the terms of the sup-

position there has been thorough repentance and a radical change of heart, and he is no longer disposed to harm anybody. If both were *fitted* for Heaven, there is no reason why they might not dwell together there in harmony.

But (3) here is the trouble. The victim has never repented of his sins and become *fitted* for Heaven. The supposition is that he is unregenerate, though he "has always been peaceable, law-abiding, industrious, charitably disposed, has done great good to his fellow-man, and has won the respect and admiration of the community." All good so far, but something more is needed to fit a man for citizenship on high. Supreme love for God is needed. One may be a good citizen here and not love Him at all. Every man of our race must be prepared to give the praise of his salvation to the Lord Jesus Christ, else he would not be in sympathy with the redeemed. Their united song is "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be glory and honor." But this "victim" has not, on the supposition, thus accepted Christ. He cannot sing that song. He thinks his own goodness sufficient to entitle him to Heaven. If admitted to that company, he would be out of sympathy with them. He could not be happy in their society, nor would they be happy with such a discordant element

there. Moody is right when he says: "The man who should get into Heaven by his own good works would want a corner by himself, a harp by himself, and a song to himself." He could not give all the glory to Christ. God will never allow the harmony of Heaven to be disturbed in that way; and why should not the blessed in Heaven rejoice that He will not? And although we cannot conceive of a saint "looking with complacency on the misery of the lost" in itself considered, why should he not be glad that God will maintain forever the harmony of Heaven by shutting out discordant elements?

Whatever other good traits a man may have, if he is not in sympathy with the redeemed about their Savior, the gates will not open for him. Do you call this hard? A few years ago there were in this land able, talented, educated, eloquent, gentlemanly men, and beautiful, accomplished, fascinating women, who were rebels against the Government. They spurned and spat on the old flag. Did they deserve to be treated as good citizens because of their ability and their beauty? On the contrary, did we not feel that their superior intelligence and culture made them more guilty than the "poor white" rebels? And laying aside the question of their deserts, how would these gentlemen and ladies have enjoyed an old-fashioned Fourth of

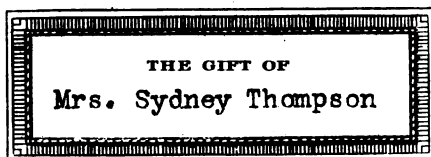
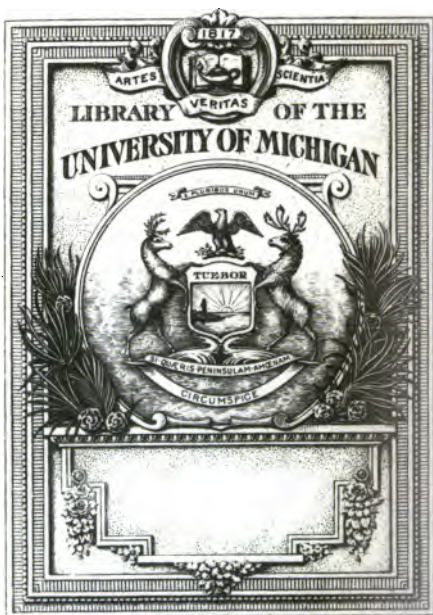
July celebration? How much pleasure would they have taken in singing "The Star Spangled Banner," and the "Red, White and Blue," with a multitude of loyal citizens?

Now, if this "victim" was lost because, and only because, he was not fitted for Heaven, what had the manner of his death to do with his ruin? Is it said that if he had not died so soon and so suddenly he would have become fit? Possibly he might; and then again he might not, but like many others, have grown more wicked as he grew older and been more Hell-deserving at seventy than at thirty-five. Admit that his murderer sent him to perdition sooner than he otherwise would have gone, yet he may have gone less heavily burdened with guilt than if he had lived out his days. May we not presume from God's goodness that if He had forseen the victim's repentance He would in some way have averted the murderous blow? Why may we not, in the absence of all knowledge, as well assume that as the opposite, to say the least? Now, if the "victim" did not go to perdition because he was murdered, nor the murderer to Heaven because he was a murderer, but each went at death to the place he was fitted for, what is left of this "suppositious case?"

The case of the penitent thief on the cross is

somewhat analogous. Just suppose that one of the men from whom he stole was a moral Pharisee, very strict in all his interpretations of the law, and as blameless in his life as Saul of Tarsus before his conversion, but a rejector of Christ. He, we will suppose, was standing near the cross, and heard the thief's confession and prayer, and the Savior's answer: "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." How indignantly he might have exclaimed: "Hear that now! This fellow who stole my 'pearl of great price,' and is hanging for it there as he deserved to, is going straight to 'Paradise' 'to-day,' according to the words of this Jesus of Nazareth! Did we not rightly reject such a Teacher? How absurd that he can be the Messiah!" Yet the world has rejoiced for eighteen hundred years that the penitent thief found a Savior.

As for the duration of this exclusion from Heaven, it must of necessity last as long as the *unfitness* lasts. The Savior says "everlasting punishment," setting it over against the "eternal life" of the righteous. He puts into the mouth of the compassionate Father Abraham the statement that "there is a great gulf fixed" between Dives and Lazarus. If He who loved and pitied men enough to die on the cross for them says these things, who has the right



DIVINE AND HUMAN STANDARDS.

In a recent issue of the *Tribune*, we suggested a test case of a malicious murderer, who becomes regenerated after his conviction and goes to Heaven ; and his victim, who is moral, benevolent and just, but unregenerate, goes to hell, to which the Rev. Mr. Hammond, in the last Sunday issue of the *Tribune*, made a very able and strong reply from his dogmatic standpoint. We "supposed" the case, not as a belief of the *Tribune*, but to elicit opinions on one of the most important of all human concerns as they appertain to the hereafter of the soul and the conditions of its future existence. We stated the case because it is impossible to overrate the magnitude of the question and the vital consequences involved in man's fate after death, and hence any information that may help settle the question whether that condition is one of endless sleep, of everlasting bliss or misery, or one of probation or purgatory and eventual restoration, would be gladly received by thousands of people whose minds are unsettled on these points. We have printed all sorts of arguments bearing upon the question, some favoring annihilation, some restoration, and some eternal punishment. As none of them, however, seemed to speak with that authority that carries conviction, or to shed any new

light upon the great and awful mystery that overshadows mortals in their earthly pilgrimage from the cradle to the grave, we put an extreme case, and it is this case which Mr. Hammond has discussed, and from his standpoint it is doubtful whether another word need be added to his argument that would be of any value. Nevertheless, there is one objection which arises in the mind that Mr. Hammond has not met, and it may be thus stated :

It is the almost universal view in all Christian countries that the Almighty has endowed man with a conscience and a sense of moral justice, notwithstanding the efforts of some of the philosophers to establish the theory that conscience is only a result of education in its influence upon the conduct and sentiments. By this conscience — this inner tribunal set up in every man's heart — we establish a standard of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, of mercy and forgiveness, and we have no other standard to which we can resort for our moral decisions. This standard is taught in our pulpits, in our law books, in our courts, in our public journals, and by public opinion. In the Christian portion of the world there is no conception of the Almighty, considering the attributes of His character as they pertain to mercy and justice, that to human comprehension justifies Him in establishing a lower standard of right for His own action and a higher one for ours. In other words, when a certain course of conduct, according to the light of civilization and an awakened conscience, is right for us,

would it be right for the Almighty to take a contrary course? If so, of what use are the divinely implanted conscience and the sense of justice and of right and wrong? This is the great question that arises in the human mind, and which leads man to revolt against this double standard of right and wrong.

Take the case we have "supposed." Would it be right for a state court, the supreme court of the United States, or any civil or religious tribunal, under our test, to consign the unregenerate, moral murdered man to everlasting torments for his sins of omission and his evanescent faults, and to reward the red-handed, malice-prepense assassin, fresh from the blood of his innocent victim, with the ecstasies and beatitudes of the blest? If such a disposition of the two persons is in accordance with Mr. Hammond's views of the justice of the Almighty, then it is evident that he believes the Almighty acts upon a different code of ethics from that which he has implanted in the breasts of His creatures for their guide and government in dealing with each other.

But is not the difference between God and man this: that His mind is large and comprehensive, ours small and limited; and if we can comprehend His mind at all, how can we look at it in any other light except that He would possess less of the feelings of hate, revenge, anger, and unforgiveness even, than the best, most loving and merciful of men? Constituted as they are, it is difficult for reasoning men to see why ephemeral, finite creatures, born into

this world not of their own will or consent, influenced by irresistible hereditary traits and by the environments of society, usage, custom, and circumstance,—creatures of impulse and error, and the best of us only copyists of those who have gone before us, or of those about us whom we respect and look up to,—should be consigned to infinite tortures as punishment for finite offenses. They have great difficulty in comprehending it, unless God is actuated by a different moral code and impulses, and works upon a different moral standard from themselves; and this condition is just as incomprehensible to them as the other. In stating this position, we once more assure orthodox Christians that we are not stating views which the *Tribune* entertains, but the views of great multitudes of “doubters,” which make them slow to accept orthodox teachings on the Hell question, and keep them out of churches. It is the difficulty of creating any other moral standard than that which God Himself planted in human breasts that makes such doubters as Beecher, Canon Farrar, Swing and Thomas; and what is doubt to them becomes positive unbelief in the brain of an Ingersoll. The difference between these men is principally a difference in their manner of stating their views, after all. Col. Ingersoll is an iconoclast by nature—a fierce, carnal, hearty hater, and heavy hitter—and attacks eternal punishment “without gloves,” and has no sympathy for any one who believes in it; while the Rev. Mr. Beecher, being a spiritual teacher and reverential and emotional in

his nature, reaches similar conclusions, so far as Hell is concerned, but by a smother route. And yet, if Colonel Ingersoll is honest in what he says, and speaks his real convictions, is he doing any more than following a conception that was planted in his mind, and acting upon the standard set up by his individual conscience? The Rev. Mr. Hammond's argument is unanswerable if we concede that there are two kinds of justice and mercy and of right and wrong, different from each other, one for man and the other for the Almighty; but the difficulty of understanding this, and the general disbelief that the Almighty will judge us by a harder standard than that which we apply to our erring fellows, is the secret of all the doubt and much of the infidelity that now prevail in the Christian world.—*Tribune, Feb. 10, 1878.*

AGREEMENT OF THE "DIVINE AND HUMAN STANDARDS."

To the Editor of the Chicago Tribune.

DEAR SIR:— I have read your editorial of the 10th inst., entitled "Divine and Human Standards." Your courtesy and your kind appreciation of my argument in the *Tribune* of the 3d inst. encourage me to write again, with regard to that "one objection" which you think I have not met.

I perceive that you have omitted from the question with which your third paragraph begins, the fact that this murderer has become a truly penitent, regenerated man, before being rewarded "with the ecstasies and beatitudes of the blest." A very serious omission, accidental, no doubt, but which introduces a totally different man—"a red-handed, malice-prepense assassin, fresh from the blood of his innocent victim," with no hint of any change of disposition. That is a kind of man about whose salvation I have said nothing. He is not the man of your "suppositious case," and I have nothing at present to say of him.

But give us back the old man with whom we have become acquainted in this argument, and then see whether the state courts and the Almighty are in conflict

The Court, after a fair trial, says: "This man has been guilty of a capital offense, and deserves to die."

The Almighty says — to Noah in the second beginning of the human race, for a law to the race — "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed."

The Court says: "The well-being and protection of human society require that this man should die."

The Almighty says — this time to Moses when providing laws for His chosen people — "Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer; . . . for blood it defileth the land, and the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein but by the blood of him that shed it."

The Court passes sentence on the culprit, appoints a day for his execution, giving him a brief time to prepare for death, and then exhorts him to spend the few intervening days in seeking that preparation, closing with the words — spoken often with tears — "And may God have mercy on your soul."

The Almighty says: "Let the wicked forsake

his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, for He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

And now this candidate for the gallows, by your own supposition, heeds the advice of the Court, and the voice of the Almighty, confesses his sins, truly repents, becomes a new man, and rejoices in the promises of grace. He goes uncomplainingly to the gallows, which both the Court and God says he has deserved, and thus disappears from mortal sight. God heeds the *prayer of the Court*, and does "have mercy on his soul." Instead of any "different code of ethics," here is absolutely a perfect agreement from the first to last!

An appeal of the case to "the supreme court of the United States, or any civil or religious tribunal," would show the same agreement. Is it not about time, then, to let your penitent criminal rest? True, he committed murder, but he "refused not to die" for it. He obeyed both divine and human counsel in repenting and seeking mercy, and became another man. Is it fair to drag this regenerated man down again, besmear him with blood, and put the old dagger back into a hand that would now abhor to use it?

Compare now the human and the divine

standard as applied to the "moral" man in your "test case." I admit, let me premise, the authority of the "human conscience and sense of moral justice." I would include the *reason* also as God-given, and not the product of education. What, now, does this human standard require and declare?

1. That every man shall exercise a hearty, genuine good will toward all his fellow men.

2. That he shall shun all deeds and intents inconsistent with this good will.

3. It declares of any conduct seemingly benevolent and kind, which is proved to have sprung from some selfish motive, and to have been merely a device to secure some personal end, that it is to be condemned without hesitation, despite all the fair appearances.

4. It requires approbation of all other "good-willers to men," and even coöperation with them in all their wise plans of benevolence, to the extent of one's ability and opportunities.

5. Inasmuch as God is recognized as the greatest conceivable "good-willer to men," and the wisest of all planners for the good of men, the human standard requires the greatest approbation of God, and the most constant and faithful coöperation with Him in His plans.

6. Inasmuch as God's government and laws.

are all in harmony with this good-willing to man, the human standard requires cordial submission to His laws and His government.

7. *To claim, then, a genuine good-will to man, while refusing to love and obey the wisest and best Good-Willer to men, is a contradiction.*

I do not expand or illustrate these propositions, for they are self-evident. I infer from them that genuine love to man and love to God are one thing in principle, and neither exists without the other. Each includes and implies the other. The "moral man" of your supposed case, then, who confessedly was not pious, was not regenerate, nor a religious man, *had no genuine good-will to man*. His apparent benevolence was spurious. It was at best only emotional or instinctive, springing from no settled purpose; and may even have been consciously selfish.

Thus far we have the human standard. What is the divine standard? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself." "If any man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" "This commandment we have from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

According to this standard, a man who does not love man cannot love God. The Apostle

also reasons conversely : " By this we know that we love the children of God when we love God and keep his commandments." The proof of love to man is found in love and obedience to God. Behold again how the divine and the human standards agree !

But perhaps you say : The human standard would not punish this moral man. Human *law* would not, for that is imperfect, is confined to overt acts, and has only a limited time for its jurisdiction, while God has to deal with the soul forever. But the moral sense of mankind often condemns when the law acquits. An indignant public sentiment often banishes from society one who has escaped the meshes of the law.

Now, let me suppose a case. Suppose a similar man that, instead of dying at fifty, lives on for a thousand years. His heart never changes. His mental power never wanes ; his bodily vigor is unabated. He has, as we have seen, no principle of benevolence, and what emotional benevolence he may have soon evaporates with his increasing years. But the selfish principle grows with his years like the greed of the miser. Experience makes him more shrewd in his plans, more capable of managing men and compassing his ends with every passing decade and every generation. How many generations

would pass before his gigantic selfishness and consummate ability would make him the terror of mankind? Parents would warn their children and grandchildren to beware of the man who had used them and their fathers and their grandfathers for his own selfish purposes. And very likely there would at length be a combination to rid the earth of his presence. If the human standard had to deal with the selfish man forever, it would be no more lenient than the divine standard.

Consider further that the difference between the murderer and his victim was never one of principle, but only one of modes and particulars. Both violated the same law of love or goodwill to fellows. For the same authority which said, "Thou shalt not kill," said also, "Thou shalt not covet." And the one precept is equally essential to the divine government with the other. One man has violated this great principle of law, brutally and violently; the other, politely and reputably; the one with an offense against society, which society has punished, God approving, by hanging, and so balanced the earthly account between the men, leaving both to be dealt with for their sins against God.

Is it still urged that "one of them is forgiven and taken to Heaven and the other not?"

Yes ; but both had the same offer of pardon and Heaven, on the same conditions. Doubtless the respectable man was oftener where the glorious gospel was preached than the desperado, and was oftener urged to become reconciled to God. But he rejected, or at least neglected, the offer, while the other accepted. Is God partial, then, for blessing the one and withholding from the other the salvation which he would not accept, and could not enjoy without accepting ?

For convenience, Mr. Editor, I have said "you" in this discussion, but I do not forget that you have disclaimed editorial responsibility for the sentiments, and only set them forth as the views of "doubters," and to elicit answer. Indeed, without this disclaimer I should be very slow to impute to the *Tribune* any such excuses for evil doers as that they are "creatures of impulse and error," with "irresistible hereditary traits," and that their evil deeds are "evanescent faults." It would be a sad thing if so influential a journal should thus undermine the foundations of responsibility.

The *nature* of future punishment, whether "torment" and "tortures" inflicted, or only the inherent tendencies and consequences of sin, and the proportion of the human race lost, I have not time now to discuss. Yours respectfully,

H. L. HAMMOND.

CHICAGO, Feb. 26, 1878.

THE NATURE OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

Much obloquy has attached to the doctrine of Retribution, because it is thought to imply that a God of love will torment His creatures. "The torments of the damned" is one of the appalling phrases used by the *Tribune* in its supposed case. To understand this matter let us consider the elements of future misery. We may not be able fully to grasp the subject, but some things are certain :

1. One element of that misery must be *self reproach*.

If the divinely implanted conscience and the sense of justice and of right and wrong require a man to love his fellows and consequently to love and obey God, and if according to the supposition he refuses to do it, and elects to lead a selfish life, what can conscience do but condemn him for that selfishness? That part of his nature, divinely implanted, as we all admit, its functions fixed by the Creator, can never approve of his moral attitude. He can never get away from that witness against himself. The most he can ever do is to divert his thoughts

from the accusations for a time. But the accuser lives and will ever live an integral part of his very being, and probably in the future world this diversion of thought will be impossible. If so how real, how emphatic and how permanent must be this element of misery !

“ I sat alone with my conscience
In a land where time had ceased ;

* * * * *

The ghosts of forgotten actions
Came floating before my sight,
And things which I thought were dead things,
Were alive with a terrible might. ”

In this world conscience alone has often driven the unaccused, even the unsuspected criminal to suicide or to a voluntary surrender of himself to justice. What must it not do in a world where all excuses for wrong doing shall have vanished ? —where the light of truth shines with its eternal undimmed brightness !

But does this prove that God is a willing tormentor of His creatures ? It must be admitted that if He had not given men a conscience they would never suffer self-reproach. Therefore in so making them He is in a sense their tormentor. But without conscience men would not have been moral beings. They would have been capable of none of the enjoyments and high prerogatives of moral agency. They would have been no higher in the scale of being

than horses or elephants, than dogs or monkeys. They could have had no thought of their Maker, no communion with the Father of spirits — no sin, indeed, but no holiness either. Conscience was not given to torment us, but to make us moral creatures. Her function is not necessarily, or indeed normally, one of condemnation. The boiler was designed to raise steam and propel the steamboat, not to explode and destroy it. When man is obedient, the voice of conscience in approval is sweet as the song of birds. It is never discordant except when the law of good-will, which is also the law of happiness, is disobeyed. For that disobedience the man alone is responsible, and therefore he is his own tormentor, not his Maker.

2. Another element of future misery will be the *disapprobation* of *fellow creatures*.

We are social creatures. We enjoy commendation from others. We are pained when they withhold it, and when we are conscious of guilt there is no mitigation of that pain.

This disapprobation the selfish man is sure of: from the good certainly, for their example is a perpetual reproof;—from the bad too, since a conscience which condemns themselves will emphatically condemn others for the same things. What an element of misery must this be! How effectually will it exclude the bad

from the society of the holy! An atmosphere prevails in Heaven which the unholy cannot breathe; while they see and know its purity, they also know their own unfitness to enjoy it. The sacrilegious Uzziah when smitten with leprosy hastened of his own accord to get out of the company of the priests in the Lord's temple.

And yet here also we may say that when God gave man this love of commendation He foreordained this kind of torment for the sinner. Yet not for the sake of that torment, since without that nature the joys of companionship would have been unknown. Man would have been a lonely, pitiable creature. He must be made a social being even though that implied the possibility of sorrows as well as joys.

Does God then really add this ingredient of torment to the miseries of the lost? Or has the guilty man here also become his own tormentor by unfitting himself for good company?

3. The crowning element of future misery is the *positive expression of God's displeasure*. Some are disposed to make remorse the chief element of future misery. But John says: "If our heart condemn us God is greater than our heart." God's conscience is of the same kind with man's, only infinitely greater, and must condemn. His example of benevolence

must reprove also. In addition, God is the moral ruler. He made men, and is bound to govern them. He must reveal to them the great law of good-will, and must hold them to account for their treatment of it. If they disobey He must show his displeasure, not merely as another moral being but as the Law-giver and Ruler. How He will do this we may not be able to tell, but certainly in some positive manner. It is not enough that the sinner's own conscience condemns and his fellows disapprove him. Something more is needed than the natural consequences of crime for the protection of society among men. Positive restraints and inflictions are demanded.

A governor cannot say: "The criminals all know that I condemn them by my example and my testimony, and that is enough for me to do." Nay, he is bound as the representative of the people, in the name of the people, and for the protection of the people, to set in motion the machinery of the government for the arrest and conviction of those thieves and murderers, and their punishment in the penitentiary or on the gallows; so also positive action is demanded of the Divine Governor.

The Scriptures do not represent God as standing forever with folded arms to see the natural results of sin work themselves out on the unrepenting sinner.

True there is divine long-suffering and patience with His rational creatures, but the time comes at length when forbearance ceases and retribution is in order. Bible history teaches this. The flood, the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the plagues of Egypt, were not mere natural effects of sin.

So as we look to the future world, the sacred writers tell us of "everlasting punishment," unquenchable fire," a "worm that never dies," "destruction from His presence," casting "into outer darkness," exclusion from the glorious city.

The variety of these and other expressions proves that no one of them is to be understood literally, and the idea which has been heralded as a new discovery in modern times, that there is no literal fire and brimstone for the torment of the wicked, is not at all new but as old as theological thinking.

But this intense oriental imagery teaches unmistakably that God will in His own personality set Himself against the sinner

Is He therefore a tormentor? We must admit that the giving of the law laid the foundation for retribution on its transgressors, and in so far we may connect the Lawgiver with their miseries. But the law is not a mere arbitrary rule of duty: it is a guide to happiness as well,

“The man who doeth these things shall live by them.” “The commandment was ordained to be unto life.”

Now if God, knowing that this great rule of Good-Willing is the only road to happiness for His moral creatures had not imposed it on them, how could his goodness be asserted? How could it be shown that He had the welfare of His subjects really at heart? He must prescribe that law, He must enact it with authority; as certainly must He notice the infractions of this law and call to account those who trample it under foot.

And again we reach the conclusion that the transgressor has but himself to blame if the law condemns him and demands of him a fearful penalty. God is not his tormentor; he has destroyed himself. The law ordained to life he has made an occasion of death.

DURATION OF FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

Why should it be forever? it is asked. In addition to what has been already said on page 16, let us ask, Why shouldn't it be forever? What is there to shorten it? God can never change. No change in him is conceivable that would not mar His perfections and fill His empire with woe. The law can never change or be changed; conscience can never change or be changed. What then can limit the duration of future misery?

Is it suggested that these free agents may hereafter change their attitude toward God and His law and so end their misery? I would by no means limit their freedom, or deny the possibilities of such a change, nor can it be denied that should it occur it would deliver from self-reproach for subsequent conduct. It would also insure the commendation of fellow creatures and of the Creator for the future.

But would it deliver from penalty already incurred? Who can say that there may not be a degree and a continuance of rebellion which He cannot forgive? Such seem to be the

teachings of God's word. The blasphemer against the Holy Spirit "hath never forgiveness neither in this world nor that which is to come." "There is a sin unto death, I do not say that he shall pray for it." "If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth for us no more a sacrifice of sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversary."

"God's call thou may'st not always slight
And yet the gate of mercy find."

But what are the probabilities that any soul will ever so whirl itself out of the deep ruts of selfishness in which it has run for a life-time? "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then may ye do good who are accustomed to do evil?" The fatal power of an inveterate habit, the tendency to permanence of character, are great presumptions against any such new attitude of will.

Listen also to the words of the Great Teacher: "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins, and where I am thither ye cannot come." However we may reason about the inherent possibilities, here seems to be plain teaching that as a matter of fact there are no changes of character after death, and if no change of character, then none of destiny.

Is it still objected that endless punishment for the sins of this short life, or as the *Tribune* has it, "infinite torments as the punishment of finite offenses," is excessive and therefore unjust?

The objection assumes that sin is an isolated act, and not a state of the will; whereas, until there is true repentance and a radical change of character, every sin is continuous — a permanent condition of the will, just as ill-deserving a thousand years hence as to-day, and so a continuous punishment *fits* a continuous sin and is not unjust.

The supreme court of Vermont was once embarrassed about their jurisdiction over a thief who stole a horse in Canada, took him through Vermont and sold him in Massachusetts. But her celebrated farmer judge, Harrington, decided that "although he stole the horse first in Canada, he repeated the stealing every step of the way through Vermont;" and he might have added: "He stole him anew in Massachusetts, and when he sold him, he put stolen money in his pocket, and continued to steal as long as he kept the money or what the money bought."

Judge Harrington's decision was accepted as good law. The principle holds in the Court on High. The soul who repeats his sins every

step of the way through eternity "is guilty of an eternal sin," as the revision has it, and so deserves an eternal punishment.

NUMBER OF THE SAVED.

“But if this doctrine be true, it is still objected, the human race are a failure, for the vast proportion of them are lost. God has created these untold millions for certain destruction. How could a God of love who foresaw all this ruin, yet, bring these millions into being?”

This very specious objection is founded on a mistake. The vast proportion of our race are not the lost but the saved.

To begin with : more than half of the human family die in infancy, and so are saved. If any one should dispute the salvation of the little ones, I surely need not argue with him. The day has gone by for such an argument. But some may say these infants should not be counted, their term of life is so brief. Nevertheless, they are an integral part of the family ; they count in the mother's heart ; they counted in the arms of Christ, who said, “Of such is the kingdom of heaven ;” they count in the presence of the Father, where “their spirits do always behold His face.” They are by no means to be left out in the census of the great family ; and they at the very outset of

the inquiry refute the statement that the vast majority of our race are lost. An early death has snatched from perdition perhaps six-tenths of all generations past, in heathen no less than in Christian lands.

Now, add to these the adult believers, who in the most favored Christian countries like the United States, are one in five of the population, deducting from church members, if you please, a large percentage as insincere, yet adding, perhaps, an equal number who are sincere Christians though not enrolled among the saints, not forgetting those who in their last days learn to trust in the only Redeemer, nor those others who, in less favored lands, are striving, like Cornelius, to walk according to the light they have received, and then count on the right side, perhaps, seven-tenths of all who have lived to the present day.

Nor stop there ; look forward to those glorious millennium days which the Lord's people anticipate, when the gospel shall be known among all nations and all people shall rejoice in its light for, perhaps, thousands of years ; when our Redeemer "shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied," when shall appear "that great multitude which no man can number of all nations and kindreds and peoples and tongues standing before the throne

and before the Lamb clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, crying with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb.'"

In those blessed days, which some of the Lord's people expect as the result of preaching the gospel, and others as connected with the second coming of the Lord, but all are expecting, how will the proportion of the saved increase? How, in the contrast, will the percentage of the lost dwindle away! The good will not always appear to be the few; the bad will not always seem to be the many.

Once, indeed, the Master truthfully declared, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat, because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But it shall not always be so "A nation shall be born in a day." "The handful of corn on the mountain top shall shake like Lebanon." "All nations shall come and worship before Him." "The isles shall wait for his law."

No! In the final enumeration of the Lord's hosts at the winding up of human history, the great scheme of redemption for man will not be found a failure. Grace will gain a glorious triumph. Many sons will be brought to glory

through the Captain of their salvation. The prepared heavenly mansions will not be found standing empty. "The nations of the saved shall walk in the light of 'the New Jerusalem,' and the kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor into it."

It is then no absurd or violent presumption of some orthodox writers that "the saved will ultimately outnumber the lost as much as the law-abiding citizens in a civilized community outnumber the convicts in the penitentiary." But whether that shall be the proportion or not, let us know assuredly that the believers will triumph. "The righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." They will no longer be the few, the weak, the despised, but the great multitude with crowns of everlasting joy upon their heads; and God's scheme of redemption will be counted no failure, but will have all the glory of their salvation. Nor will the great author of that scheme lose aught of His glory because some of His moral creatures have abused the mysterious powers of free agency by refusing all his calls of mercy. He will be able to challenge the universe in every such case: "What could I have done that I have not done for their blessedness?" Thus, while his kind, persistent efforts to reach and save will prove that God

delighteth not in the death of the sinner, their continued misery will be a warning to all God's moral creatures of the fearful peril of rebelling against God and then slighting offered mercy. Thus, some good will come to God's great empire out of their perdition. It will be a perpetual object-lesson against sin.